Soups / China

Wonton Soup

Thin-skinned pork-and-shrimp wontons float in a clear, shimmering ginger-scallion broth so clean it catches the light like pale amber glass — each dumpling a small, silk-wrapped parcel that blooms open on first bite, releasing a cloud of seasoned pork fat and sweet crustacean into the hot soup. The wrapper itself, stretched to near-translucency by the boil, is the quiet achievement of the dish.

Time 80 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 200 g Ground pork (25% fat)
- ☐ 150 g Raw shrimp, peeled, deveined, roughly chopped
- ☐ 30 pieces Wonton wrappers (thin Hong Kong-style, square)
- ☐ 15 ml Light soy sauce
- ☐ 10 ml Shaoxing rice wine
- ☐ 8 ml Sesame oil
- ☐ 10 g Fresh ginger, finely grated
- ☐ 20 g Scallions, white and pale green parts minced
- ☐ 1 whole Egg white
- ☐ 1200 ml Chicken stock (light, clear)
- ☐ 15 g Fresh ginger, sliced 3 mm
- ☐ 2 stalks Scallions (for broth), tied in a knot
- ☐ 3 g Salt and white pepper
- ☐ 15 g Scallion greens, thinly sliced

Let's make it.

01 Combine the ground pork, roughly chopped shrimp, soy sauce, Shaoxing wine, sesame oil, grated ginger, minced scallion, and egg white in a bowl. Mix vigorously with your hand or a pair of chopsticks in a single, consistent direction — always clockwise, or always counter-clockwise. This directional mixing develops a myosin network in the pork that gives the filling its characteristic bouncy, springy texture rather than a crumbly, meatball-like one. Mix for 2–3 minutes until the filling becomes cohesive and begins to pull away from the bowl walls slightly. It will feel paste-like and slightly sticky — that is correct. Refrigerate for 20 minutes before filling — a cold, firm filling is far easier to wrap. Test the seasoning by cooking a small teaspoon of filling in a pan or microwave for 30 seconds and tasting it. It should be quite savory and slightly salty-sweet, because the broth is relatively delicate and will dilute the filling's intensity.

02 Set up a folding station: a damp towel to keep wrappers from drying, a small bowl of cold water for sealing, and the chilled filling. Place one wrapper in the palm of your non-dominant hand like a diamond (corner facing you). Place a heaped teaspoon (about 10 g) of filling in the center. Do not overfill — the filling will expand during cooking and overfilled wontons burst. Fold the wrapper in half, pulling the corner nearest you up to meet the far corner, making a triangle. Press the edges firmly to seal, pushing out any air from around the filling as you go — trapped air creates steam pockets that burst the wonton. Wet the two bottom corners of the triangle with water. Bring these two corners together beneath the filling and press firmly — they should slightly overlap. The finished wonton looks like a bishop's mitre or a crinkled bonnet. Work quickly and keep finished wontons on a floured tray, covered with a damp cloth to prevent drying.

03 Pour the chicken stock into a medium saucepan. Add the sliced ginger and tied scallion knot. Bring to a bare simmer over medium heat — small bubbles breaking the surface, not a rolling boil. Let it steep at this temperature for 15 minutes to extract the ginger and scallion flavor without making the broth cloudy. The goal is a clear, pale gold broth with a clean, restrained aroma of ginger and spring onion. Season with salt and white pepper to taste. The broth should taste pleasantly savory and lightly seasoned — it will be intensified by the starchy wonton cooking water that inevitably enters the bowl, and by the filling's seasoning as the wonton cooks. Remove the ginger and scallion knot. Keep the broth at a gentle simmer while you cook the wontons.

04 In a separate large pot, bring unsalted water to a vigorous rolling boil. Add the wontons in batches of 8–10, never overcrowding. Stir gently immediately after adding to prevent sticking to the pot bottom. The wontons will sink initially, then rise to the surface as they heat through — this takes about 3 minutes. Once floating, cook for exactly 2 more minutes. The wrapper should be fully translucent, slightly gelatinous, and the filling should be visible through the skin as a dense, cooked-pink mass. Remove with a slotted spoon and place directly into serving bowls. Boil wontons in the separate water, not the broth — this keeps the finished broth clear and free of the starchy protein foam the wontons release during cooking. Ladle the hot, clear broth over the wontons at the table. Scatter scallion greens on top.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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